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The Indian and His Problem by Francis E. Leupp

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*The Indian and his Problem.* By FRANCIS E. LEUPP, formerly United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910. Pp. ix, 369.

Mr. Leupp, who dedicates his book to ex-President Roosevelt, under whom he held office, has "mixed with Indians for twenty-five years," during which period the Indian problem has had a wide variety of phases,—from deeds of violence on the part of the aborigines (often the result of blunders and aggression on the part of the whites) to the awakening of the American national conscience in the last few years and the beginning of an era of justice instead of an epoch of plunder. In saying, as he does, that "The Indian problem has now reached a stage where its solution is almost wholly a matter of administration. Mere sentiment has spent its day; the moral questions involved have pretty well settled themselves. What is most needed from this time forth is the guidance of affairs by an independent mind, active sympathies free from mawkishness, an elastic patience and a steady hand," the author gives utterance to the current pragmatism of the apostles of the strenuous life. In discussing the diverse topics with which the seventeen chapters of the book deal: The Indian as he was, What happened to the Indian, The problem and a way out, Working of the Burke law, Disposing of the surplus, The Indian service, Theory and fact in education, Time for a turning, The Indian at work, The Indian as a capitalist, Legislating for a dependent race, Liberty and discipline, A few illustrative cases, Missionaries and their methods, Philanthropy and criticism, The Indian territory experiment, As the new day nears its noon, Mr. Leupp talks more humanly than the common representative of officialdom, when the question is one of "a dependent race." Characteristic of our American treatment of and our ignorance of the Indian and his problems is the statement on page 2:

"Do you know anything, by actual contact and experience, of the Indian country and the conditions there?" I once asked a distinguished Attorney-General of the United States, whom I had been vainly trying to induce to make a special inquiry into an Indian case then before him.

"God forbid!" was his fervid response, as he raised both hands and extended their palms toward me with the gesture of pushing away an unwelcome suggestion."

And yet this "statesman," Mr. Leupp informs us, "was a highly bred product of the East."

How different the point of view of those friends of the Indian to-day "whose purpose toward the superseded race is neither robbery nor charitable exploitation, but honest, unselfish, practical help." Mr. Leupp points out the evils that have come to the Indian through unwise special legislation, the reservation system and its accompaniments, the graft of the Indian service, bad educational efforts and too much paternalism, mistakes of missionaries and *faux pas* of religious teachers, wasteful philanthropy, white outlawry, etc. Interesting are his views concerning the experiment of the "Indian Territory," the working of the Burke law and other enactments. A picturesque and artistic people such as the Indians are need "improvement, not transformation," and in our dealings with them we need "to get back to common sense." On pages 326-327 the author allows himself a brief polemic against what he terms the "pseudo-scientists," who desire only that "the Indian may be left undisturbed as a social nonconformist and a human oddity." The future of the Indian is undoubtedly, as Mr. Leupp says, "to be absorbed and merged into our race," and, "regarded in its broader aspects, the intermarriage of Indians and Caucasians has nothing to condemn it." In this case, "there is no barrier of race antagonism to overcome, for the Indian and the white mingle everywhere on a legal and social equality; and the offspring of such a marriage derives from each of the parent races certain traits which work well in combination." After all, the Indian question is "a human, not a mere race question." It must always be remembered that "the Indians are descended from a free and independent ancestry, full of race pride, disdainful of new and alien things." It is their equality with the white, not their inferiority, that must weight our judgment. If the American Indian has not produced a Booker T. Washington, he has brought forth a Juarez and a Hiawatha!

ALEXANDER F. CHAMBERLAIN.